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ABSTRACT

In August 1979, Amedeo Giorgi presented a workshop on "Phenomenological Theory and Method" at the University of Goteborg (Sweden). This report describes that workshop. First, the major concepts of phenomenology are introduced (Intentionality, Description, Reduction, and Essence), followed by a brief description of Husserl's philosophical phenomenology. The second section of the report describes the idea of the "subject-world relation", i.e. the ontological claim that the relation is a non-causal one. To illustrate differences of opinion between Husserl and Merleau-Ponty, three aspects of the relation are described: internal/external, experience/behavior, and facts/possibilities. Finally, a comparison is made between phenomenology as a philosophy and phenomenologically grounded empirical psychology. (Author/BW)

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Amedeo Giorgis empirical phenomenology

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Introduction

During the last fifteen years a debate has been carried on concerning research methods in the human sciences. Up to this period it could be said that the methods available in educational research, in one sense, represented a rather homogeneous perspective.

This perspective was now challenged and it was argued that, in relation to certain problems, the existing methods were not the most adequate. Earlier, Kuhn (1962) had introduced the paradigm-concept which will prove useful in a description of the focus of this debate. Kuhns idea was that the scientific development within a discipline could be described as a series of revolutions. What he meant was that the essence in such a revolution is that the conception of the phenomenon is radically changed. It was the existence of what Kuhn calls anomalies, i.e. facts or conditions that are unexpected or contradictory in relation to the dominating paradigm, that gives rise to such revolutions. In other words, the fundamental assumptions concerning the object of scientific study affect the method of investigation. Subsequently, if the idea of the phenomenon changes, aims and methods will also change. What Kuhn wanted to do was to direct our attention to those moments in the history of science when decisive steps were taken and describe the characteristics of those events. The examples he states in order to illustrate his thesis, mostly belong to the natural sciences, where a typical development is that one paradigm is definitely substituted by another.

In relation to the current debate within the human sciences, I believe that the terminology Kuhn uses, might be helpful in understanding what the debate is all about. Accepting the concept of paradigm would mean that, for instance educational research, could be carried out in more than one way.

The debate had been started by somewhat sweeping criticism of the way the research had been carried out so far. Gradually it became more and more clear that having objections on a general level against a certain paradigm was one thing, transforming these objections into a concrete research programme was another

matter entirely.

This was the situation in which our research group (named INOM[1]) at the Department of Education, University of Göteborg, was started. In the early seventies we made some preliminary studies concerning how people perceive the world they are living in. We thought it would be interesting and valuable to describe, for example, pupils' conception of the content they meet in education as well as how they experience the learning situation.

In the beginning, we had no theory and our investigations were based on pure commonsense. Only later did we gradually become acquainted with a tradition where the "world-as-experienced" was the main theme.

It was in the philosophical direction called phenomenology that we discovered certain similarities to our own empirical approach. But the relation between a philosophy and empirical research is certainly not an unambigious one and in what way the phenomenological tradition could provide a basis for concrete empirical work was far from clear to us.

By then we had come across Professor Amedeo Giorgi's work at Duquesne University, Pittsburgh. Professor Giorgi had been working on this question for some time. He saw phenomenology mainly as a means to elaborate a method adapted to empirical issues. Furthermore, his concrete interests in learning coincided with our own.

This, in short, is the reason for Professor Giorgi's invitation to our department where, in August 1979, he led a workshop entitled 'Phenomenological Theory and Method". In this report we shall try to give a description of that workshop.

The aim of the workshop was to give a phenomenological foundation to empirical psychology. This was done by analysing theoretical phenomenological concepts during the morning sessions of

1) In Swedish short for Learning and Conceptions of the World around us.

the workshop and, in the afternoon sessions, by actually practising a method developed by Giorgi, for analysing experienced phenomena, such as the phenomenon of learning.

In this report, the combination of theoretical and practical analysis covered in the workshop will be presented within the following structure. Firstly, we shall begin with an introduction to some of the major concepts of phenomenology, (namely, Intentionality, Description, Reduction, and Essence) followed by a brief description of Husserl's philosophical phenomenology. In the second part of the report, we shall describe the idea of the 'subject-world relation'. This is perhaps the most important contribution that phenomenology can offer psychology, i.e. the ontological claim that the relation is a non-causal one. We shall describe three aspects of the relation, - internal/external, experience/behaviour and facts/possibilities - partly in order to illustrate some of the differences in opinion between the two leading exponents of phenomenology, Husserl and Merleau-Ponty.

We shall then return once again to the major phenomenological concepts, in order to make a comparison between phenomenology as a philosophy and phenomenologically grounded empirical psychology. Our intention is to clarify the differences between the two, and to provide a basis for the phenomenological method presented in the next part of the report.

Finally, we shall give a brief description of how the INOM-group studies relates to the approach presented by Giorgi in which the main difference is that the directions aim at descriptions on different levels.

This report should not, of course, be seen as <u>the</u> description of phenomenology. It represents one particular line of thought within the phenomenological framework that can serve as a theoretical foundation for an empirical method. The report follows closely the outline of Professor Giorgi's workshop, but naturally he should not be held responsible for the actual text.

Major Phenomenological Concepts

The contribution phenomenology makes when applied on psychological problems is to offer an alternative way of looking at the investigation of human phenomena. The difference between the approach of phenomenology to psychological problems and that of traditional psychology can be illustrated by considering their respective notions of behaviour. This can provide a useful key to understanding what it is that characterizes phenomenology and the point is put in a footnote in Merleau-Ponty's book "The structure of Behavior".

> "One says of a man or of an animal that he behaves; one does not say it of an acid, an electron, a pebble or a cloud except by metaphor. In the present work we have attempted to elucidate directly the notion of behaviour and not to follow its development in American psychology. We will justify briefly this direct procedure by calling to mind the ideological disorder in which the notion of behaviour has been developed in the country of its origin...
> ... the notion of behaviour had a difficult time making its way among philosophies which did not succeed in conceptualizing it. Even with its principal initiator, Watson, it found only an insufficient philosophical articulation. It was said that behavior was not localized in the central nervous system, that it resides between the individual and the environment, that consequently the study of behavior can be made without a word about physiology, and finally that it is concerned with a stream of activity which the living being projects around itself. But what is healthy and profound in this intuition of behavior - that is, the vision of man as perpetual debate and "explanation" with a physical and social world - found itself compromised by an impoverished philosophy. In reaction against the shadows of psychological intimacy, behaviorism for the most part seeks recourse only in a physiological or even a physical explanation, without seeing that this amounts to putting behavior back into the nervous system. In our opinion, when Watson spoke of behavior he had in mind what others have called <u>existence</u>; but the new notion could receive its philosophical status only if causal or mechanical thinking were abandoned for dialectical thinking". (A.Tilquin, Le Behaviourisme 1942, in Merleau-Ponty 1967 pp 225-226)

Thus, not even the most radical proponent of behaviorism could, according to Merleau-Ponty, willingly consign behavior to the purely physical domain.

The contribution that Merleau-Ponty makes is to give to behavior "its proper ontological status" by taking it out of the purely physical domain. He does this by conceptualising behavior as a relation between the subject and the world, where the relation is a dialectical one. In Merleau-Ponty's ontology there is more than the objects and ideas of classical science and classical philosophy - there is also structure, where structure is "the joining of an idea and an existence which are indescernible" and behaviour, he says, is structural. This perspective on behaviour as structural is the means by which Merleau-Ponty undercuts the dichotomy between internal and external and unifies subject with world. Embodied in the concept of a subject-world-relation is the idea that man is intentional. This should not be interpreted as "having intent" but rather as being necessarily directed towards the world (similarly, consciousness is always consciousness 'of something'). At the same time, objects in the world are necessarily embedded in a subject-world-relation. Thus, this is just another way of stressing the inseparability in this relation. Consequently any phenomenon is a subject-world-relation.

The idea of a dialectic between subject and world, gives priority to neither subject nor world. The acknowledgement of such a viewpoint allows the possibility of us being able to be completely faithful to our experience of the world. We can describe neither the objective world nor the subjective world, but only the world as we experience it. Thus the object for phenomenologically grounded psychological investigations should be the world-as-experienced.

So if we are to describe faithfully our experience of the world, how are we to do this.

With the strong emphasis on the inseparability of subject and world, there is a need for another kind of viewpoint from which investigations can be undertaken. It is here that we must in-

introduce a distinction concerning different levels of attending (being in) to the world. At one level we are handling the world in a pre-reflective manner, which means we are close to it, directly involved in it, "living it" to use phenomenological terminology; or, in Merleau-Ponty's words "I am outside myself in the world of my project". But the fact that experience embodies a dialogue between subject and world implies that there is something more than just the world we direct our attention to at the pre-reflective level. If we are to attend to that something else, i.e. the <u>way</u> of experiencing, then we need a second level of attending, the reflective level. Thus, at the reflective level the object of our investigation is the relation between the what (is experienced) and the how (it is experienced) or in phenomenological terminology, the "noema" and the "noesis".

This is the key to phenomenology as a method - we take into account the <u>way</u> the the world is experienced and this requires <u>phenomenological reduction</u>. The reduction itself consists of considering not only what is experienced but also the mode or manner in which it is experienced. To express this prosaically, in the reduction we take a step back from the lived experience, and reflect upon it - on what is the necessary structure of that experience, on what it must be like in order for those perceptions to occur. The reduction is a two-step procedure. First the experience is put within brackets, i.e. it is regarded as an appearance. In the next step the phenomenon is imaginatively varied in order to obtain the in-variant feature of the phenomenon. Husserl expresses this in the following way:

> "We may in free fancy, vary our actual world and transmute it on any other which we can imagine, but we are obliged with the world to vary ourselves also, and ourselves we can not vary except within the limits prescribed to us by the nature of subjectivity. Change worlds as we may, each must ever be a world such as we could experience... My psychological experiences, perceptions, imaginations and the like remain in form and content what they were, but I see them as 'structures' noe, for I am face to face at last with the ultimate structure of consciousness." (Husserl, 1977)

It may be helpful to see the procedure of phenomenological reduction as analogous to the standard procedure of concept attainment. Here, we decide for a particular instance of a triangle what there is about it that we would not change for it still to be a triangle. By carrying out a reduction on it, seeing all the possibilities that this single instance can generate, we see that, for example, it can be any colour or any size, but it cannot have any number of sides. It is part of the essence of our concept of the triangle that it has exactly three sides. This is a standard procedure within our lived experience, but if we stand back from this and use a similar procedure, not on the objects in the world, but on our experience of the world, then we are using the phenomenological reduction to discern the necessary structure of the experience, or the <u>essence</u> of a phenomenon.

The concept of an essence has caused some bewilderment partly because essences are often spoken of as something absolute, definite, beyond cultural or other dependencies. This might hold true for the philosophical use of the term, but within psychology the meaning of the word must be understood in a more pragmatic sense. An essence would represent the deepest understanding available established on the basis of intersubjective agreement.

Some Husserlian Notions

Phenomenology is, in Husserl's words, a descriptive science. Husserl wanted, in contrast to all forms of psychology, not to start with ontological assumptions but to return to "the things themselves". This was to be done through a series of reductions. Reductions aimed at getting rid of everything that was known about the objects of perception or thought, to put them within brackets, in order to reach pure phenomena.

This ambition rested upon Husserls conviction of an attainable objective truth. Truth was something independent of the perception of a human mind. Therefore it was of utmost importance to recognize the fundamental objectivity upon which the concepts of human consciousness are based. Thus, according to Husserl, the meanings are not imposed by ourselves on the objects of our world, that would lead to subjectivity. But neither can the content of the objects be fully ascribed to the objects themselves - just waiting to be discovered by the mind. It is by means of the concept "Intentionality", which attempts to describe the relation of conscious awareness to objective phenomena, that Husserl launches his philosophical investigations. He sees an illustration of the fundamental error of all conceptions of human knowledge in the Cartesian statement "I think, therefore I am". Instead, he finds it more appropriate to transform this into "I think something" therefore I and the reality stand in an inseparable relation to one another.

This relation between consciousness, and the object of consciousness, is intentional in the sense that what consciousness is aware of is, at the same time, something objectively distinct from itself and objectively within itself. In other words, consciousness contributes objectively to itself. Here "objectively" is a consequence of Husserl's conception of intentionality, not as the subject's constructive relation to the world but as the denial of every dichotomy that would prevent us from regarding subject and world as a link in "the same ontological continuum". All objective discovery is truely transcendental in the sense that the experience of an idea, principle or object necessarily means that the subject transcends himself. The fact that apprehending reality thus binds the consciousness to

the objects of its knowing merely shows the intentional character of the relation. It does not, of course, guarantee that a true essence has been conceived. Whether a meaning is true or erroneous is confirmed by its potency for verification, which is dependent upon the intuitional experience.

By intuition Husserl means a fundamentally rational insight. It is an act of consciousness that secures the experience of a true essence. The basis for confirmation of a true essence within this philosophical framework is not an empirical issue, although intersubjectivity is mentioned as a demand. Husserl simply states that there are various modes of intentionality whereby consciousness relates to it's objects.

It was Husserl's opinion that his work could also serve as a clarification of the foundations of psychology. In the case of psychology that would mean that he could offer a radical reformulation and understanding of important psychological concepts.

Perception, for instance, is a concept that, according to Husserl, is used in an unquestioned way. His aim was to reach the essence of that concept through reduction, to clarify it - in phenomenological terminology - to thematize it, and to bring into conscious awareness its full meaning.

To do this he needed a scientific method that would satisfy the following demands. It had to be (i) faithful to every experience of the world, (ii) capable of discovering the essence or meaning of that experience, (iii) applicable to anything that could be experienced (including dreams, fantasies etc) and (iv) flexible enough to cover the whole variety of experience in a faithful way. This method he called the "intuitioning of essences" or ideation. It consists of being present to everyday experience, standing back from it, reflecting not only on what is experienced, but the way it is experienced, and seeing the imaginative possibilities of that experience.

Husserl claimed that the intuiting of essences was applicable to all possible phenomena. Through a series of complicated analyses he attempted to demonstrate that with this method, an investigation of consciousness itself could be undertaken.

Aspects of the Subject-World Relation

1) The internal - external aspect

We have pointed out earlier that phenomenology is mainly a philosophical issue. That is to say, it concerns itself with how the world is to be looked upon. Accordingly, phenomenologists claim that their contribution to psychology, as to other sciences deals with the foundations upon which it rests. Both Husserl and Merleau-Ponty are critical of what they see as the limited ontology of the existing sciences, i.e. philosophy, the human sciences and the natural sciences. The ontology of a science depends on whether it takes an internal or an external viewpoint. For philosophy, especially logicism, the focus is on the internal, and understanding is reached through reflection and deduction. In the natural sciences, and in the human sciences, for instance historicism and sociologism, the focus is on the external, and understanding is reached through observation, experiment and objective description. As an alternative, however, instead of isolating either the internal or the external viewpoint, phenomenology allows an integration of the two and, in this sense, it can precede empirical science.

Phenomenologists claim the priority of everyday life over scientific life: science has to be sensitive to the structures of everyday life. So, if phenomenology is to be looked upon as providing a primordial discipline of the world that is capable of being propaedeutic to both the human sciences and the natural sciences, it must provide an account of how this is to be done. Husserl's answer is the Eidetic science. An Eidetic science is a science of the possible. As mathematics generates the possibilities for physics, etc, so phenomenological psychology can generate the possibilities for the human sciences. All the possible mathematical forms and structures such as numbers, groups etc, would be parallelled by all the possible psychic forms, such as ways of seeing, ways of feeling etc. (One specific example of a psychic form might be the spontaneous organisation of the visual field into figure-ground).

The internal-external aspect is represented in psychology by introspectionism and by behaviourism respectively.

The phenomenological viewpoint expounded by Merleau-Ponty aims to undercut the conflict between those perspectives. It is done via the concept of 'structure' which, he claims - is prior:

> "... the negation of materialistic realism seems possible only to the benefit of mentalistic realism and conversely. It is not seen that, from the moment behaviourism is considered 'in it's unity' and in it's human meaning, one is no longer dealing with a material reality nor, moreover, with a mental reality, but with a significative whole or a structure, which properly belongs neither to the external world nor to internal life. It is realism in general that must be called into question." (Merleau-Ponty, op.cit. 182)

Thus, the question of whether to consider the given reality as being in the internal or in the external world is resolved by putting it between the two, i.e. in the mental experience of the material world; the primordial given is neither mental reality, nor material reality, but 'structure'. In the light of the strong emphasis on the subject-world-unit, Merleau-Ponty further argues that both the inside and the outside perspective in a certain sense produce the same kind of data:

> "The mental thus understood is comprehensible from the outside. Even more, introspection itself is a procedure of knowledge which is homogeneous with external observation. For what it gives us, as soon as it is communicated is not the lived experience itself, but an account in which language plays the role of a general preparation - acquired once and for all - which does not differ essentially from the preparations of the circumstances employed by the objective method. The child who is supposed to say which colors appear similar to him and the monkey which has been trained to put all the slugs of the same color in a saucer are in the same situation.... Introspection, as soon as it is translated into language, affirms something completely other than the existance of certain inner qualities... The object which is intended by both external observation and introspection is then a structure or a signification which is reached in both cases through different materials." (Merleau-Ponty, op.cit. 183)

Thus, in both cases, data consists of reported observations, either of facts of consciousness or of facts about the world, e.g. observed behaviour. The presence of subject and world as expressed in world-as-experienced is lacking in the other perspectives. This new ontology requires a new way of 'knowing

what there is'. The external perspective requires the objective methods of natural science to investigate material really. In the internal perspective, introspection is a theory of description of a mental reality. The phenomenological perspective requires Husserl's eidetic science to intuit the structure of experience.

2) The experience-behaviour aspect

Phenomenologists are interested in describing experiences, but what becomes of the concept of 'behaviour'? Merleau-Ponty talks of the physical other and his acting as an existence. But as soon as his acting is to be understood it is considered in the structural sense. What does this mean? Structure here does not refer, as has been said earlier, to behaviour itself, nor is it a structure of consciousness but rather the structure of "subject-in-world". When Merleau-Ponty is most explicit on this, he defines structure in a way that has a certain similarity to the gestalt meaning of the term.

> "Structures or forms, are defined as 'total processes whose properties are not the sum of those which the isolated parts would possess. More precisely they are defined as total processes which may be indiscernible from each other while their 'parts', compared to each other, differ in absolute size; in other words the systems are defined as transposable wholes. We will say that there is form whenever the properties of a system are modified by every change brought about in a single one of its parts and, on the contrary, are conserved when they all change while maintaining the same relationship among themselves." (Merleau-Ponty, op.cit. 47)

Behaviour is neutral with respect to the internal or external perspective; instead, it is considered as a relation.

In the phenomenological subject-world relation, experience and behaviour are included, but contrasted, as two viewpoints - the presentational and the functional. Behaviour reveals experience, behaviour is a manifestation of experience - the functional and the presentational are two poles of the same structure.

In carrying out phenomenology, we generate descriptions of a person's experience of the world which include behaviour, ex-

perience and reflections as well. It is always the aim of the researcher to understand and describe as faithfully as possible all aspects of the experienced event.

3) The fact-possibility (imaginative) aspect

There is a difference between Husserl and Merleau-Ponty on this point. For Husserl, the eidetic science generates possibilities by assuming that fantasy could exceed, or extend reality. But Merleau-Ponty criticises this tendency to divorce possibilities from facts, because he sees a fact-possibility relationship that is somewhat akin to the subject-world relationship. Idealism deals with possibilities without facts, but phenomenology should keep alive the dialectical relation between facts and possibilities. To have the possibilities one needs the facts. Merleau-Ponty would claim that the use of real variation increases the ability to understand possible variations. While the physical sciences use factual, effective variation, phenomenology should use both factual and imaginative variation. This statement provides part of the basis for an empirical phenomenology. Given the assumption that reality can extend one's imaginative ability, it becomes the task of phenomenological interpretation to avoid, as far as possible, to impose any given logical order on the data. Instead one should try to discover the meanings incorporated in a factual description. Through a process of mutual meaning-creating between the experience as it was lived, and the understanding of this meaning, one discovers the structure in the relation between subject and world by actively seeking all possible lived meanings.

Phenomenological Philosophy and Phenomenologically Grounded Empirical Psychology - a comparison of four major concepts.

As was mentioned above, there are four concepts, that are central to different phenomenological traditions. However, these concepts are described differently in each tradition, a point that has significant implications for the development of a methodology. In the following part, for each of the four concepts - description, reduction, essence and intentionality - we shall present an interpretation within a more traditional philosophically based phenomenological method and within a psychological method.

The description will be presented in such a way that the differences between the methods can be compared point by point. The lefthand column gives the description of the philosophical interpretation, and the righthand gives the corresponding psychological interpretation, in accordance with Giorgi.

Phenomenological philosophy	Phenomenologically Grounded Empirical Psychology
1. Description	
Spontaneous descriptions including contextual and cultural prejudices are obtained. The rational understanding of these descriptions is not a logical one but is based on the content of the description, thus leaving no residue.	Descriptions come from others, which means that the researcher from the beginning tries to get into the intersubjective world.
a) The philosopher goes into phenomenological attitude.	a) The researcher obtains naive descriptions i.e. not present in the phenomenological attitude.
b) He describes his own experience	b) The descriptions are from other people.
c) The descriptions yield the essences.	c) The researcher derives essences using these descriptions.
	d) Researcher is in phenomenological attitude.

2. Reduction

Reduction again means the shift from the natural attitude to the phenomenological attitude or the shift from the object to the object-as-experienced.

The philosophical aim, as expounded by Husserl, is to reach the essential structures of consciousness. He is not interested in the human mode of consciousness which we know in everyday life. The kind of consciousness that we know as human beings is, to Husserl, only a point of departure. Here - in the transcendental attitude - human consciousness is considered to be a fact, and the aim of the investigation is to clarify the limits of consciousness as such, regardless of what kind of actual form it may take. This would mean that both noema (the what) and noesis (the how) is reduced and, by imagination, possible forms of consciousness as such are presented.

How could you do science in the phenomenological attitude? The answer would be that in psychological practice there is often an implicit phenomenological attitude in the sense that the individual report of an experience is different from what the experimenter or therapist knows to be true (as in threshold experiments, therapy sessions etc).
This would mean that there is room for the difference between the object or event and the object or event as experienced.

a) The subject's description is in the natural attitude - how he lived the event
b) The researcher implicitly goes into the phenomenolgocial attitude in order to understand the natural attitude better.

In phenomenologically grounded empirical psychology the subject (noesis) is not reduced (to an example of consciousness). The subject is regarded as a real existing human being. But what about the object? In the reduction one talks of the object-as-experienced. The object (noema) is understood in the various ways it presents itself in experience. The aim of the reduction is to find an objective description in the family of subjective variations obtained.

3. Essences

Essences are universal. They are obtained through free imaginative variation.

Essences are regarded as general, typical or stylistic. Essences are more content-dependent than philosophical essences. They are obtained through free imaginative and factual variations.

Philosophers speak of 'existences' and 'essences'.

Psychologists speak of behaviour and structure (as a certain way of describing essence).

4. Intentionality

Consciousness is intentional. Consciousness is something in itself and yet constituted by what is distinct from itself.

Behaviour is intentional, i.e. behaviour is always directed toward something. It is here that Merleau-Ponty speaks of the body-subject in contrast to the conventional viewpoint of body as an object. By this he means that the body is sometimes better oriented than consciousness and acts on itself.

A Phenomenological Method in Psychology

In a research project on learning, Giorgi has given concrete form to the theoretical considerations mentioned in the former section. The method used in this project is based on the idea that the aim of research has to be a discovery of what constitutes learning for ordinary people going about their everyday activities and how learning is accomplished.

The subjects are asked to describe in as much detail as possible a situation in which learning occurred to them. The desriptions thus obtained are analysed in order to get at the structure of learning in each case. These structures vary between individuals and the aim of every analysis is to reach the meaning of learning in each case.

It is assumed that each meaning will contribute, in it's own way, to an ever fuller understanding of the phenomena of learning by giving fidelity to the phenomenon as it is lived. This is accomplished by analysing each description according to the following points:

1) Read through the protocol to get a sense of the whole.

2) Divide the protocol into "meaning units" or constituents as expressed by the subject. Mark the protocol each time a transition in meaning is perceived. Ask the question "does this say something different from the previous one with respect to the theme?" (This point corresponds to the A-column in the examples given in Appendix).

3) Interrogate each meaning unit for its psychological relevance.

4) Reduce meaning units to those that characterize the experience.
   Carry out a "free-imaginative variation" on each one to check that these statements capture the essence of that learning situation. (Corresponds to the B-column in the Appendix)

5) Integrate the statements into a structure. synthesize the statements into an integrated whole that embodies the structure of that learning experience in such a way that it can be compared with structures derived from other situations. (Corresponds to Specific Description)

These five steps merely represent the order in which the analysis is undertaken. As is often the case with more or less technical instructions, they provide a fairly meagre impression of the work they are supposed to initiate. It is the rigour and the careful analysis of an actual protocol that gives you the idea of the possible exactitude in this kind of work. (To illustrate the application of this method, two examples are given in the Appendix).

The qualitative analysis of data is one important characteristic of the phenomenological approach, but there are others. We shall end this session by quoting an article by Giorgi in which he states some important characteristics of the phenomenological approach (Giorgi, 1975).

1) Fidelity to the Phenomenon as it is lived

2) Primacy of Life-world

3) Descriptive Approach

4) Expression of Situation from Viewpoint of Subject

5) Situation as Unit of Research Implies Structural Approach

6) Biographical Emphasis.
"A phenomenological approach tries to formulate its key terms after dialoguing with the data. This means, however, that the initial data, at least for human subjects, must be biographical and personal because all human phenomena are temporal, historical and personal."

7) Engaged Researcher

Although the aim in phenomenological research is presupposition-less description one should be aware of the fact that this is not possible. As in all scientific work, the results are produced by an involved researcher.

8) Search for Meaning

In the dominating research tradition one tries to assess the meaning of obtained measurements. Within the phenomenology "the meaning is the measurement".

Qualitative methods - Giorgi and the INOM-group

The workshop gathered people who, in different ways, worked with qualitative methods.

This caused a lot of lively discussions during the fourteen days the workshop lasted. In this last section, we would like to concentrate on a description of how the approach worked out by the INOM-group relates to the approach advocated by Giorgi.

Although the approaches have many things in common - and this is even more apparent if they are compared to other directions in the psychological domain - they also differ in some respects.

We shall concentrate here on some of the differences.

What is difficult when comparing the two approaches is that they have gradually reached positions that, on a superficial, level have a striking resemblance. Moreover, it is important to realize that these positions were arrived at from quite different points of departure. Giorgi has all along been rather firmly anchored in theory, while the INOM-group has developed in a far more pragmatic way. This is very well reflected in the aims of the directions.

Both argue for a descriptive psychology, but when it comes to what is to be described we find a difference that is crucial.

To make this clear we shall have to return once again to the basic concepts of phenomenology. Because of intentionality, the object of phenomenological studies is the world-as-experienced. The only way to gain access to a phenomenon is through experience. The evident research strategy, therefore, is to obtain descriptions of how the phenomenon in question has been experienced or "lived".

The way to analyze such a description is in short; put the experience in brackets and vary it imaginatively in order to reach the invariant structure of the phenomenon. This is called

reduction. This process takes place in the phenomenological attitude which represents a certain level of awareness, i.e. the level on which we consciously reflect over an experience. But as was mentioned earlier, phenomenologists also talk of a pre-reflective level or a natural attitude. The significant characteristics of the natural attitude would be that the world is described as though there were no human subjects. Thus, this rather subtle distinction between natural and phenomenological attitude, refers to different levels of attending the world.

This distinction between two levels of attending the world that exists within pehnomenology, seems to correspond very well to a distinction that is made in the INOM-group approach.

> "A fundamental distinction is therefore made between two perspectives. In the first-order perspective, which is noumenal or a matter-of-fact, the intention is to describe the world as it is. The second-order perspective (for which a case is made in this paper) is phenomenal, experiental, the-world-as-perceived, the intention is to describe the world as people experience it. From the two different perspective different aspects of reality are visible and we arrive at different levels of description." (Marton, 1978)

The resemblance is obvious - on the terminological level. Still, the distinctions refer to quite different phenomena and this is due to the fact that they are made within different contexts.

What is an ontological assumption in Giorgis phenomenological method, namely that the world is always an experienced world, is exactly what Marton wants to point out as the very special characteristics of statements belonging to the second-order perspective.

The distinction between first and second-order perspective is made, simply to direct attention to the fact that the aim of the kind of research advocated by the INOM-group is to describe the different ways in which people perceive a phenomenon. The distinction is mainly a practical one and does not concern ontological assumptions. Where phenomenologists speak of different attitudes, the INOM-group speaks of different levels of description.

As a matter of fact, from a strict phenomenological point of view, the INOM-distinction disappears.

Now, it is also possible to see in what ways the aims of the directions are affected by their different theoretical foundations.

The idea of essences is an essential part of the phenomenological framework. The theoretical system thus contains an overall guideline in phenomenological studies. The results must be viewed accordingly. That is to say it is the meaning expressed in different descriptions that is of prior interest. Empirical variations successively add to an ever richer understanding of a phenomenon. It is tempting to think of an essence as a full and unambiguous meaning in a specific subject-world-relation.

This interpretation of the essence-concept is far too solemn, according to Giorgi. He views it in the following way. To him, he says:

> "'structure' is a term of knowledge, not something in experience. It is a way he as researcher expresses in-variant meanings that may be lived variably in a contingent sense, but not essentially. (For example, he says, a child who burns his finger, by putting it in a flame and withdraws it and later refuses to put a finger near a flame expresses the same meaning even though the specific behaviour differs) ... since 'structure' is a term of knowledge, in different contexts the 'essences' could change - nor are they necessarily 'unambiguous'.
>
> I describe them as clearly as I can, but it's possible that descriptions simply do not provide a good enough base for 'unambiguous ones'". (Giorgi, 1980)

The interesting effect of the idea of essences, in this comparison, is that because of this phenomenologists would tend to emphasize the common (meaning) in empirical variations.

In the INOM-approach the stress is on the opposite. For concrete pedagogical reasons, one finds it valuable to describe the different conceptions people have of a phenomenon.

Once again, the differences emerge from the fact that we compare a consistent theoretical system to a pragmatically developed scientific approach.

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APPENDIX

PROTOCOL ON LEARNING TO DRIVE A CAR

Describe as completely and concretely as possible what it was like for you to learn how to drive.

Learning to drive was important to me at 16 because it meant I no longer needed to depend on others for transportation. So I was excited when my learner's permit came. My first time behind the wheel of the car was on a Sunday in an empty shopping center parking lot. From behind the wheel the car seemed huge, especially the back of the car. I first learned how to start the car, what the PRNDL stood for and where the emergency brake was. I practiced starting the car about five times and started to feel a little more confident even though the car seemed huge.

Now I was ready to start to drive. I was nervous again and started to think maybe I wasn't ready to drive, maybe I should practise starting the car some more, as I was confident in doing that. But my teacher assured me I was ready. So I started the car, took the emergency brake off and the car moved a few feet. I remember thinking, "It's moving, it's moving" and then feeling really afraid because I was in control of the car and didn't really know what I was doing. The car moved a few feet and then I put the brakes on. They seemed really tight and jerked both of us forward. I felt I would never be able to put them on smoothly. But after driving a few feet and stopping, I felt a little more confident.

The next step was to take the car on the road. This was the most frightening time for me. The car seemed like a giant boat. I had visions of it going out of control or of my crashing into another car. As I went on to the road and in with traffic I felt that my car was all over the road - that I took up all four lanes. Everyone seemed to be passing me - I seemed to be going slower than everyone else - but if I went faster I was afraid the car would go out of control. The car also didn't seem to keep straight. I had to keep moving the wheel to keep it straight. When it was time for me to change lanes or pass other cars, I was always afraid that they would come into my lane and hit me or that I wouldn't be able to get back into

the other lane. The car just seemed so big and I didn't feel in control of it.

After learning to drive and more important just driving, the car did not seem so big, I could see it was no different from the other cars on the road. I also began to realize that the car stayed pretty straight without my turning the wheel all the time and that when I passed other drivers they would stay in their lanes.

I viewed my car in the right perspective as compared to road size and other cars.

All constituents present in S's description

(A)

(1) Learning to drive was important to S at 16 because it meant he no longer needed to depend on others for transportation.

(2) S was excited when his learner's permit came.

(3) S's first time behind the wheel was on a Sunday in an empty shopping centre parking lot.

(4) From behind the wheel, the car seemes huge to S, especially the back of the car.

(5) S first learned how to start the car, what the PRNDL stood for and the emergency brake was.

(6) S practiced starting the car about 5 times and started to feel a little more confident even though the car still seemed huge.

(7) Now S was ready to start to drive.

(8) S was nervous again and started to think maybe he wasn't ready to drive, maybe he should practice starting the car some more, since he was confident doing that.

(9) But S's teacher assured him he was ready.

(10) So S started the car, took the emergency brake off and the car moved a few feet. S remembers thinking "It's moving it's moving."

(11) Then S felt really afraid because S was in control of the car and didn't really know what he was doing. The car moved a few feet and then S put the brakes on.

Constituents of description expressed more directly in terms revelatory of learning

(B)

(1) S was motivated to learn to drive at 16 because it meant that he would no longer be dependent on others.

(2) S excited about the possibility.

(3) S gets behind the wheel for the first time in a safe practice area.

(4) From the driver's position, the car seemed huge.

(5) S next learned the meaning of certain symbols and how to perform a couple of basic sub-tasks for driving.

(6) Practicing the first operation for driving gives S some confidence but the car still seems huge.

(7) S was ready to drive after practising the first operation.

(8) However when S was about to start he got nervous again and a desire to remain at the level where he was confident arose in him.

(9) S's teacher, however, assures S he is ready.

(10) S begins to move the car by performing the first simple operations and becomes excited.

(11) S became frightened because the car started to move and S did not really know what he was doing, so he applied the brakes.

(A)	(B)
(12) The brakes seemed really tight and jerked both occupants forward. S felt he would be able to apply them smoothly. But after driving a few feet and stopping. S felt a little more confident.	(12) S applied the brakes awkwardly and thought he would never be able to apply the brakes smoothly. But after driving a few more feet S felt a little more confident.
(13) The next step was to take the car on the road.	(13) Next S had to drive in a real situation.
(14) This was the most frightening time for S.	(14) S was most fearful of actual condition.
(15) The car seemed like a giant boat.	(15) The car still seemed huge to S.
(16) S had visions of it going out of control or of crashing into another car.	(16) S had visions of not controlling the car and precipitating a misfortune.
(17) As S went onto the road and went into traffic S felt that his car was all over the road--that he took up all 4 lanes. Everyone seemed to be passing S--S seemed to be going slower than everyone else--but if S went faster he was afraid the car would go out of control.	(17) S continued to experience the car as huge, even in real traffic. S also seemed to be moving the slowest but he was afraid to go faster for fear of losing control of the car.
(18) The car also didn't seem to keep straight, S had to keep moving the wheel to keep it straight. When it was time for S to change lanes or pass other cars, S was always afraid that they would come into his lane and hit him or that he Wouldn't be able to get back into the other lane. The car seemed so big and S didn't feel in control of it.	(18) S also experienced the car as moving non-linearly and S kept moving the wheel to keep it straight. The experienced size of the car for S made it difficult for him to change lanes. The car seemed so huge to S that he didn't feel in control of it.
(19) After learning to drive, and more importantly, just driving, the car did not seem so big and S could see it was no different from the other cars on the road. S also began to realize that the car stayed pretty straight without S turning the wheel all the time, and that when S passed other drivers they would stay in their lanes.	(19) After more experience with driving, the car no longer seemed so big to S. S also realized that the car actually moved rather straight without S having to handle the wheel all the time. S also had more confidence on other drivers.
(20) S viewed his car in the right perspective as compared to read size and other cars.	(20) After learning to drive, S was able to gain the right perspective on other cars and road size.

Specific Description of Situated Structure of Learning to Drive a car.

S was highly motivated to learn to drive and was excited when the opportunity arose. Learning to drive was important to S because he wanted to be independent of others for transportation. Learning for S is apparently accomplished in 3 phases (1) Discriminating different parts of the interior of the car and performning the starting operations. Achieving the performance increases S's confidence but horizonally he still experiences the car in a perceptually distorted way (seems huge). (2) Actually driving car. Just prior to this S experienced a desire to remain at a lower level of training where he was confident but his teacher reassured him that he was ready for the next level. S was initially thrilled by actual movement but then he became fearful as he realized that he was in the position of control and did not fully know what he was doing. S was awkward in actual movement but confidence increased slightly after a while. (3) Actual driving in traffic. This is the most frightening aspect for S. S's perspective of the total situation was distorted (car seemed huge in relation to the road and other cars, seemed to move more slowly than others, seemed to move non-linearly,) and in terms of performance S did not feel in control. After learning is accomplished, S has balanced perspective with respect to his car, the road and other cars and he feels confident.

Some time ago I gave my oldest son a chess set which had been in my possession for a number of years. For a variety of sentimental reasons I considered this chess set to be a possession of rare personal significance. In other words, its value, to me, could in no way be equated with its market price. Consequently, the decision to pass this treasure on to my oldest son was arrived wiht all due consideration; and the actual "passing on" had, for me, all the significance of a sacramental act - a deeply intimate encounter between a father and his son.

My son was excited about the gift and seemed, to me, to sense its symbolic value. Indeed, during the weeks that followed he was rarely seen without the chess set in his possession. Following this initial period, however, the appearances of the chess set steadily de diminished to the point of being rarely seen. My occasional queries concerning the chess set were met with reassuring answers. Recently, however, the issue of the chess set once more became central; in a dramatic fashion.

During a game of chess with my youngest son, he asked why the pieces made "that sound" when moved from one square to another. I explained that most "good" chess pieces were weighted for stability, and that often the weights became loose through use, and made a strange rattling sound when moved. He looked at me for a moment, and said, "Oh yeah, I know what you mean. Tommy has a whole bunch of them."

"Of what?" I asked.
"A whole bunch of weights."
"Where did he get them?"
"Out of the chess men you gave him; that's why he wanted them."

I was crushed, and then angry. Tommy was in the next room playing with a cat - he was startled when I shouted his name.

"Do you know what you've done?" I asked.
"No," he said.
"Why did you tear your chess men apart?"
"For the lead weight; why are you so mad Daddy?"

Tommy's face was a mask of puzzlement. He had no idea what I was talking about.

By now I was feeling ashamed, but wasn't sure why. I hugged my son, told him that I was wrong, and assured him that the value he placed on his chess men was up to him. Later that day it was clear to me what I had learned.

Aquinas once wrote that "the quality of a gift is determined not by the giver's ability to give, but by the receiver's ability to receive." I learned that day what this means.

I had given my son a gift, which was not merely the chess set, but all the value, meaning, and sentiment which I attached to it. For me, the chess set was a symbol of what a father desires to give his son; for my son, the chess set was a source of lead weights. I had offered him a gift that he was not able to receive, either as a symbol, or as a chess set - since he was not able to perceive my values, my meanings or my sentiments. Consequently, the quality of my gift was determined by the chess-set-as-source-of-lead-weights, the gift my son was able to receive.

"The quality of a gift is determined not by the giver's ability to give but by the receiver's ability to receive." I first read this sentence years ago; I learned its painful lesson only recently.

(A)

All constituents present in S's description.

(1) S gave his oldest son a chess set which had been in his possession for a number of years. For a variety of sentimental reasons S considered the chess set to be a possession of rare personal significance. Its value to S could not be equated with its market price. Consequently the decision to pass this treasure on to his oldest son was arrived at with all due consideration; and the actual passing on had for S all the significance of a sacramental act - a duply intimate encounter between a father and son.

(2) S's son was excited about the gift and seemed to S to sense its symbolic value. Indeed, during the weeks that followed S's son was rarely seen without the chess set in his possession.

(3) Following the initial period, however, the appearances of the chess set steadily diminished to the point of rarely being seen. S's occasional queries concerning the chess set were met with reassuring answers.

(4) Recently, the issue of the chess set once more became central in a dramatic fashion for S. During a game of chess with his youngest son. S was asked why the chess pieces made "That sound" when moved from 1 square to another. S explained that most "good" chess pieces were weighted for stability and that often the weights became loose through use and made a strange rattling sound when moved. S's youngest son looked at S for a moment, and said, "Oh yeah, I know what you mean. Tommy has a whole bunch of them" - "Of what," S asked. "A whole bunch of weights" "Where did he get them?" - "Out of the chess men you gave him; That's why he wanted them."

Constituents of description expressed more directly in terms revelatory of learning.

(1) S presents a gift that had deep personal significance for him, after considerable deliberation, to his son in an encounter that S perceived to be intimate and highly significant.

(2) S perceives his son as apparently receiving and using the gift as intended by S.

(3) With time, the presence of the gift was not as pronounced, but S's queries concerning it were met with reassurance in terms of S's intentions and values with respect to the gift, or at least that is how S heard his son's replies.

(4) The real meaning with S's son received the gift became central again when S accidently discovered through another son that a behavior with respect to the gift on the part of his son (dismantling pieces to get weights) was not in line with his intention when he gave the gift.

(5) S was crushed, and then angry. Tommy was in the next room playing with a cat - he was startled when S shouted his name. "Do you know what you've done?" S asked. "No", S's oldest son said. "Why did you tear your chess men apart?" "For the lead weight: why are you so mad Daddy?"

(6) S's oldest son's face was a mask of puzzlement. He had no idea of what S was talking about.

(7) By now S was feeling ashamed, but wasn't sure why. S hugged his son, told him that he (S) was wrong, and assured him that the value he placed in his chess men was up to him.

(8) Later that day it was clear to S what he had learned. Aquinas once wrote that "The quality of a gift is determined not by the giver's ability to give, but to the receiver's ability to receive" S learned that day what that meant.

(9) S had given his son a gift, which was not merely the chess set but all the value, meaning and sentiment which S had attached to it. For S, the chess set was a symbol of what a father desires to give his son; for S's son, the chess set was a source of lead weights. S had offered his son a gift that he was not able to receive, either as a symbol or as a chess set, since he was not able to perceive S's values, meanings, or sentiments. Consequently, The quality of S's gift was determined by the "chess-set-as-source-of-lead-weights. The gift S's son was able to receive.

(10) The quality of a gift is determined not by the giver's ability to give but by the receiver's ability to receive." S first read that sentence years ago, but learned its painful lesson only recently.

(5) S was hurt, then angry and he confronted his son in an ugly mood and in such a way that S could perceive that the son was puzzled that S should be upset with him because he had used the gift the way he did - i.e. according to his own intentions.

(6) S could see that his son was puzzled and had no idea why S was angry.

(7) S felt ashamed and responded to the immediate situation by reassuring his son that he (S) was in error and that the gift could be used in any way that his son wanted it to be used.

(8) Later reflection clarified for S what had happened when he related the experience to a philosophical sentence concerning giving and receiving that he had read.

(9) S realizes later that his son could not receive the gift with the full depth and intensity with which it was offered (chess-set-as-rare,-meaningful -symbolic exchange-between-father-son); he could only receive it at his own level (chess-set-as-source of-lead-weights). Awareness of this discrepancy makes the situation intelligible for S. S's son could behave differently with respect to the gift because he was uncapable of comprehending S's full intention and on the other hand, S's different behavior could even be understood to be meaningful or valuable at another level.

(10) S's experience clarifies, as well, in a experiential or existential way, the saying of a philosopher that he had read long ago.

Specific Description of Situated Structure of Learning

In a significant encounter S presents his son a gift with the intention that it be received with the historically - laden symbolic value that the gift had for S. Early experiences with his son with respect to the gift gave every indication that it had been received with S's intention. Accidently, S became aware through another son, of certain behavior with respect to the gift that was clearly out of line with his intentions and interpretation and when S confronted his son regarding the behavior, his son was obviously confused. S responded to the confusion by ameliorating it in the immediate situation, but he was also aware that something was wrong, but he was not sure what it was. Later reflection clarified the meaning of the situation for S. He realized finally that his son could not receive the gift with the depth and intensity he intended and therefore, he (the son) inevitably had to place his own value on the gift. S related the situation to a philosophical statement he had read long ago and mutual carification of the statement and the situation ensued. Learning, for S, consisted in the clarification of a situation rendered ambiguous because a false assumption did not allow S to see the same situation in terms of different perspectives. This experience also enabled S to learn a deeper meaning of the philosophical saying he had previously read.

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